

Welcome to Today's Supportive School Discipline
Webinar Series Event!

Stemming the School-to-Prison Pipeline: Applying Restorative Justice Principles to School Discipline Practices

This event will start at 4 p.m., ET



Q&A

If you have a question for the presenters, please type it in the Q&A Pod or email sttac@air.org during the Webinar.

Feedback Form

STTAC Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
State Training and Technical Assistance Center
Dedicated to helping States and communities improve outcomes for youth.

Stemming the School-to-Prison Pipeline: Applying Restorative Justice Principles to School Discipline Practices

Please provide us with your feedback on today's Webinar by answering the questions below. The form should only take a few minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary.

The following questions will ask you about your organization's restorative justice experiences and needs.

1. How would you rate your organization's current capacity to use restorative justice alternatives to traditional school discipline practices?

	Understanding what alternatives are effective	Knowing how to implement an effective alternative	Understanding how to evaluate whether the alternative is effective
We don't have any capacity in this area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We don't have enough capacity in this area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We have adequate capacity in this area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We have excess capacity in this area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other Capacity Strengths or Needs?(please specify)

2. What kind of tools or supports would you like to have that you currently lack with regard to restorative justice alternatives to traditional school discipline practices?

3. Do any schools in your jurisdiction use restorative justice principles as the basis for your school's approach to student discipline?

At the end of the presentation, an event feedback form will appear. Please provide feedback on this event so that we can better provide the resources that you need. All answers are *completely anonymous* and are not visible to other participants.

For assistance during the Webinar, please contact the State Training and Technical Assistance Center at sttac@air.org.



Federal Partners Welcome

Linda Rosen

Member, Supportive School Discipline Working Group
U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)



SSD Webinar Series

- Increase awareness and understanding of school disciplinary practices that push youth out of school and many times into the justice system.
- Provide practical examples of alternative approaches that maintain school safety while ensuring academic engagement and success for all students.



Available Technical Assistance



Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's State Training and Technical Assistance Center (STTAC)

U.S. Department of Justice

<http://www.juvenilejustice-tta.org>



NDTAC's Supportive School Discipline Communities of Practice (SSDCOP)

U.S. Department of Education

<http://ssdcop.neglected-delinquent.org>



National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE)

U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services

<http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov>



Polling Question #1

- Which of the following best describes your role?
 - School/district administrator
 - School/student support staff
 - Teacher
 - School resource officer
 - Probation/parole officer
 - Law enforcement
 - Judge or court administrator
 - Family member
 - Youth
 - Community stakeholders



Polling Question #2

- Which of the following best describes the primary reason you chose to participate in today's session?
 - Need a refresher
 - Hear the latest research
 - Hear examples of how other communities are taking positive approaches to discipline



Agenda

1

Effective Restorative Justice Strategies for Enhancing Supportive School Discipline

Mara Schiff, Ph.D.

2

Restorative Discipline in Schools: Creating Caring Climates

Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, MSW

3

Restorative Culture in Schools

Rita Renjitham Alfred



Effective Restorative Justice Strategies for Enhancing Supportive School Discipline



Mara Schiff, Ph.D.

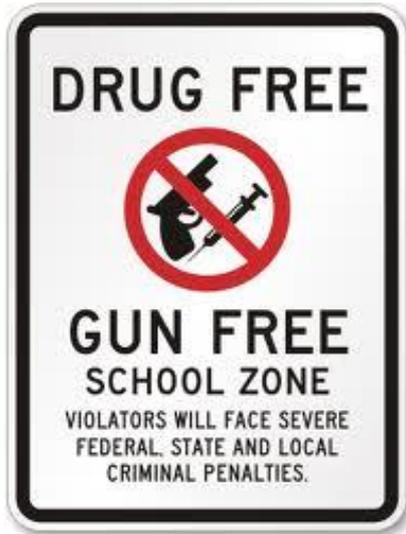
Professor, Florida Atlantic University and
President, PeaceWorks Consulting, Inc.

Presentation Goals

- Briefly examine the current state of school discipline
- Explain and clarify the elements of restorative justice
- Examine the research supporting restorative justice in schools
- Consider current restorative justice policy at the school district, state, and federal levels
- Propose the expanded use of restorative justice for redefining the collaborative role of educators, juvenile justice professional, and the communities they serve

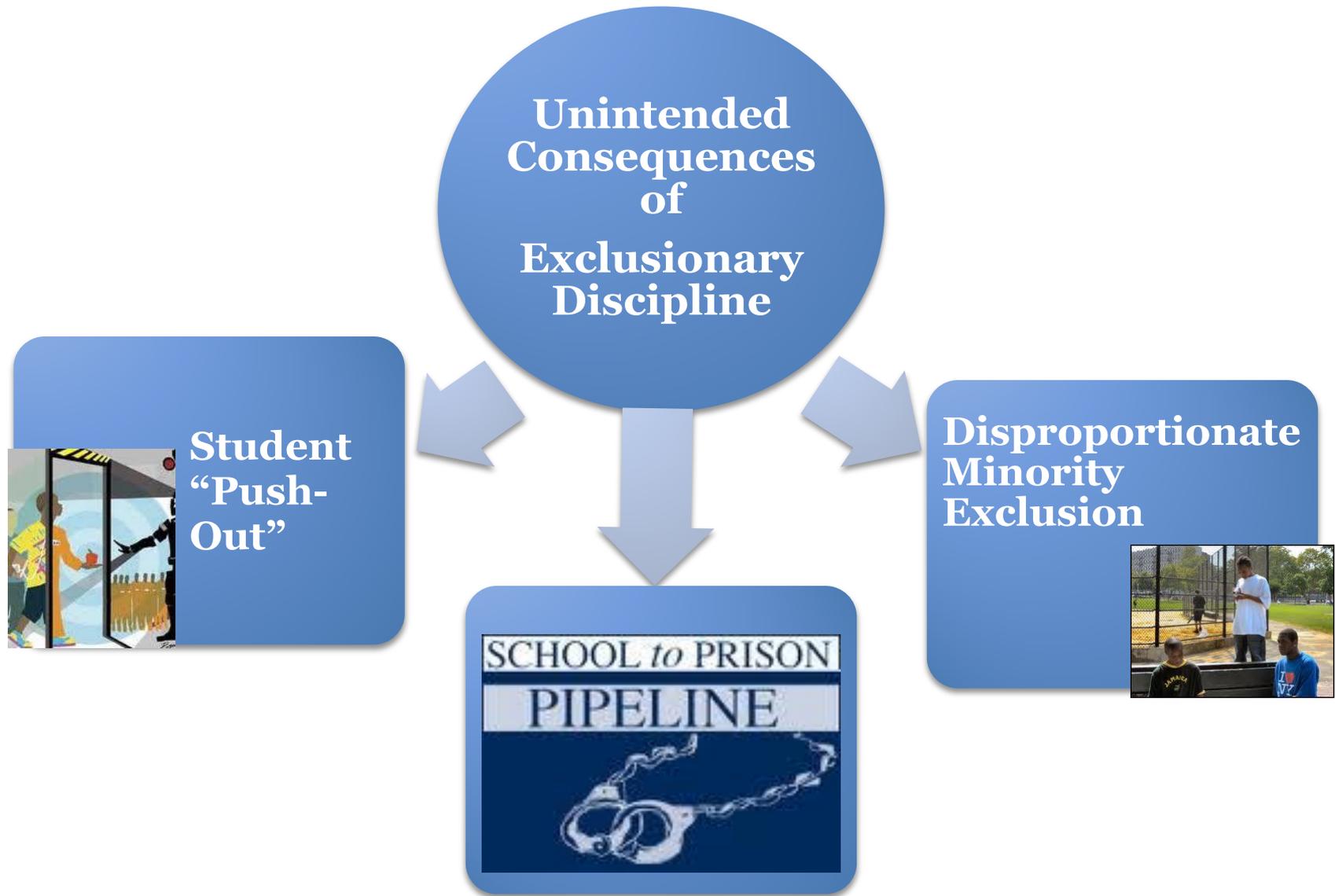


Purpose of Zero Tolerance in Schools



- To keep drugs and weapons out of schools
- To emulate retributive justice interventions such as mandatory minimums and structured sentencing
- To provide consistent consequences in proportion to the harm caused





What the Data Say

- There is no evidence that zero tolerance results in safer schools or increased academic achievement
- Zero-tolerance punishments put students at greater risk for:
 - Decreased connectivity to school
 - Increased participation in risky or illegal behavior
 - Poor academic achievement and school dropout



What the Data Say (continued)

- School suspension and expulsion increases:
 - The likelihood that students will be held back a grade, not graduate, and become involved in the justice system
 - The likelihood of subsequent suspension, expulsion, and dropping out of school.
- Higher suspension rates → lower academic achievement and standardized test scores, even when controlling for factors such as race and socioeconomic status.



What the Data Say (continued)

- Students suspended and expelled for minor infractions are more likely to be Black and those with disabilities.
- Nationally, Black students represented only 17% of public school enrollment in 2000 but accounted for 34% of suspensions; special education students represented 8.6% of public school students, but 32% of youth in juvenile detention nationwide.
- Black students with learning disabilities are three times more likely to be suspended than similarly situated White students and four times more likely to end up in correctional facilities.



Restorative Justice



Views crime or harm primarily as a violation of individuals, relationships, and communities that "creates obligations to make things right"



“Justice” is about *repairing the harm* caused to victims, offenders, and community



To the greatest extent possible, restorative processes seek to *rebuild relationships* damaged by crime and other conflicts.



Restorative Justice Principles

**Repairing
Harm**

**Including
Stakeholders**

**Accountability
Safety
Reintegration**

**Shifting
Government/
Community
Roles**



Defining Restorative Justice

A restorative response includes two primary components:

- 1) A non-adversarial and dialogue-based decisionmaking process that allows affected parties (known as “stakeholders”) to discuss the harm done to victims, while considering needs of all participants
- 2) An agreement for going forward based on the input of all stakeholders about what is necessary to repair the harm directly to the persons and community



3 Questions in Traditional Systems

1. What law was broken?
2. Whose fault is it? (Who did it and who do we blame?)
3. What do they deserve? (What should the punishment be? How should we punish them?)



3 Questions in Restorative Systems



1. Who has been hurt and what harm was done?
2. What are their needs?
3. Whose obligation is this?
(What repair is needed and who is responsible?)



The Possibility of Restorative Justice

Restorative justice has been proven to reduce suspensions, expulsions, and disciplinary referrals and is modeled after approaches used in juvenile justice and now increasingly applied in schools for dealing with youth misbehavior, rule violations, and for improving school climate.



Goals of Restorative Justice in Schools

1. Create a restorative and inclusive school climate rather than a punitive one
2. Decrease suspensions, expulsions, and disciplinary referrals by holding youth accountable for their actions through repairing harm and making amends
3. Include persons who have harmed, been harmed, and their surrounding community in restorative responses to school misconduct
4. Reengage youth at risk of academic failure and juvenile justice system entry through dialogue-driven, restorative responses to school misbehavior



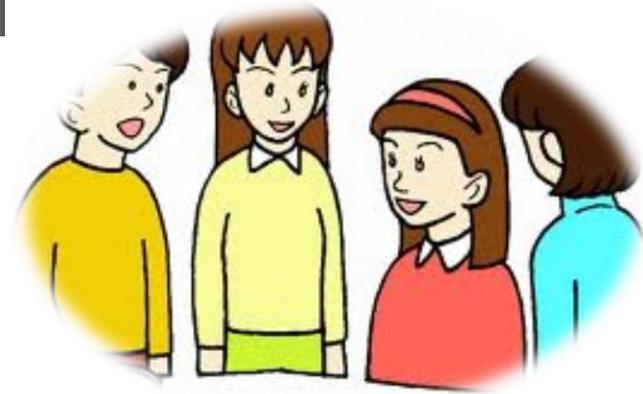
Restorative Strategies in Schools

1. Focus on relationships first and rules second
2. Give voice to the person(s) harmed and the person(s) who caused the harm
3. Engage in collaborative problem-solving
4. Enhance personal responsibility
5. Empower change and growth
6. Include strategic plans for restoration/reparation



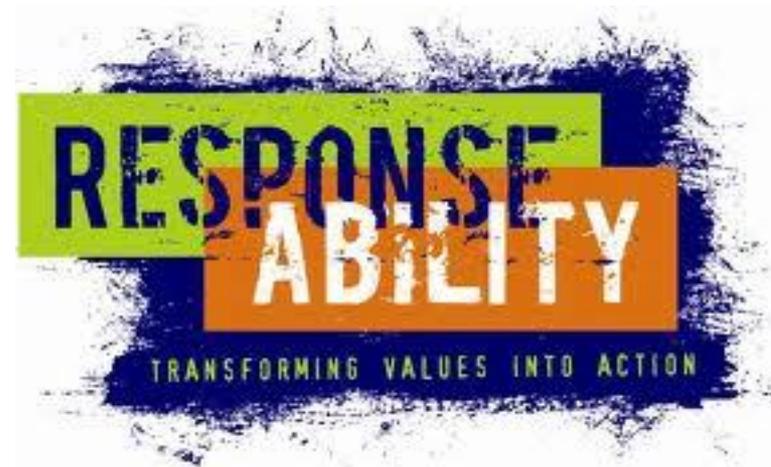
Benefits to Person(s) Harmed

- Has a VOICE and a CHOICE in the process
- Feels less intimidated by a less formal process
- Has root causes of conflict uncovered
- Can express needs for reparation
- Experiences increased satisfaction
- Begins to heal through positive resolution and reparations
- Feels some power, safety, and/or reassurance



Benefits to Person Who Commits Harm

- Understands affects of his/her actions on others
- Develops empathy
- Repairs harm (meets needs of victim)
- Takes responsibility
- Becomes part of solution
- Learns from experience
- Changes future behavior



Benefits to School Community

- Students learn conflict resolution skills
- Focus is on inclusion, not exclusion and isolation
- Negative incidents decrease
- School climate improves
- Empowerment increases
- Personal responsibility increases
- Deals with underlying problems/issues
- Acknowledges harm to community
- Establishes norms, values, culture, and accountability



Benefits to Broader Community

- Community involvement increases
- Relationship to school strengthens
- Community members feel their children are safe
- Students know the community cares
- Community experiences less conflict



For School Administrators, Teachers, and Staff

- Involves others in problem solving to eliminate second-guessing (too harsh/too lenient)
- All parties agree to participate in decisionmaking process and information is shared



Restorative Justice in Schools

At this time, restorative practices in schools are known to exist in: **California**, **Colorado**, Florida, **Georgia**, Illinois, **Maine**, **Maryland**, **Michigan**, **Minnesota**, **Missouri**, **New York**, **Texas**, **Pennsylvania**, and **Connecticut**.

Restorative Practices include:

- Restorative mediation
- Conferences
- Circles
- School accountability boards
- Daily informal restorative meetings
- Classroom circles
- Restorative dialogue
- Restorative youth courts
- Peer mediation



Research Outcomes

City/State	Restorative Process	Outcome	Source/Year
<i>Minnesota, MN</i>	Circles Conferences Mediation	Referrals, Suspensions: ↓48%-63%	Minnesota Department of Education, 2003, 2011
<i>Denver, CO</i>	Classroom meetings panels, and conferences	Police Tickets ↓68% Out of school suspensions: ↓34-40% Expulsions ↓82%	Advancement Project, 2010 Gonzalez, 2012
<i>Philadelphia, PA</i>	Circles	Suspensions ↓50% Violent/serious acts 2007/08 ↓52% 2008/09 ↓40%	Lewis, 2009

Research Outcomes (continued)

City/State	Restorative Process	Outcome	Source/Year
<i>Oakland, CA</i>	Whole-school restorative justice circles	Suspensions ↓87% Expulsions = zero	Sumner et. al, 2010
<i>Chicago, IL:</i>	Restorative peer juries	Suspension Days ↓1000 days	Ashley and Burke, 2009
<i>Palm Beach, FL</i>	Circles	Suspension ↓131-300 days in 2 schools Referrals: ↓78% Absences: ↓54%	Schiff, 2012



Research Outcomes (continued)

City/State	Restorative Process	Outcome	Source/Year
<i>Portland, OR</i>	Restorative meetings	Suspension Days: 2008/09: ↓71 days 2009/10: ↓108 days	Gonzalez, 2011
<i>Baltimore, MD</i>	Whole-school restorative justice	Suspension Days: from SY 08/09 to 09/10: ↓88%	Ashley and Burke, 2009
<i>Lansing, MI</i>	Restorative Practices	Suspensions: ↓15%	Gonzalez, 2011
<i>St. Louis, MO</i>	Whole-school restorative justice Circles	Suspension severity: ↓27%	Gonzalez, 2011

Select Qualitative Data

Palm Beach County (FL) Teachers and Administrators:

- “Since [the restorative justice program] has been on our campus, our [out-of-school] suspension rate has dropped by 40% and our in-school suspension rate has decreased by approximately 50%.” PBL Assistant Principal
- “...students like being ‘heard’...many of our students... don’t even know certain actions are wrong. This opens the door to teach students acceptable and appropriate behaviors, behaviors that will be expected of them in mainstream society.” PBL Teacher
- “[The program] allows students an opportunity to be accountable for their actions in a non-threatening way with a productive positive outcome being the end result.” PBL Reading Teacher

Select Qualitative Data

From Students:

- “... I realize that I was doing things that I shouldn't have been doing and making big mistakes...I learned ...in this process... that I have a bad attitude and I could do better for myself.” PBL Student
- “...I have gained self confidence and have found myself helping others. I realize that they are capable of being accountable for their actions. I have also learned how to be a better person by not judging others.” Santa Fe Student
- “... I realize that I have come a long way from where I was then. I have become a bigger person and have learned to think about my actions before I do them... If I talk about a problem... I can keep myself from doing something I may regret later. I used to believe that I didn't have much control over how I react to events, but now I realize that it's up to me how I react and I can't blame my anger for all my problems.” PBL Student

Changing School Policy



Chicago Public Schools Policy

- Since 2006–2007, the *Chicago Public Schools Student Code of Conduct* reflects “a comprehensive approach to student discipline and include[s] components of restorative justice, alternatives to out-of-school suspension, and additional measures aimed to ensure a safe and positive environment for students and school personnel.”
- For infractions ranging from disruptive behavior in the classroom to fighting, the code of conduct encourages the use of age-appropriate discipline and balanced and restorative justice strategies, including student, teacher and parent conferences, detention, in-school suspension, and referral to school peer jury in lieu of out-of-school suspension.



Oakland Unified School District Policy

- Since 2009, restorative justice is the official policy of The Oakland Unified School District (OUSD).
- OUSD uses a three-tiered model of prevention/intervention/supported reentry in response to conflict and harm.
- The restorative justice program lowers suspension and expulsion rates and fosters positive school climates with the goal of eliminating racially-disproportionate discipline practices and the resulting push-out of students into the prison pipeline.



Denver Public Schools Policy

- As of August 2008, Denver Public Schools discipline policy includes **restorative interventions**.
- Restorative options are:
“... problem solving interventions done ‘with’ the offender. They are driven by the victim as much as is possible and focus on the harm caused and how it will be repaired. Examples include family group conferencing, victim-offender mediation, or classroom peace circles.”



Additional School Policies

- In 2009, the **San Francisco Unified School District** Board of Education adopted *Resolution No. 96-23A1* to replace some student suspensions with more restorative interventions. Instead of simply suspending students who violate school rules, restorative interventions will be used.
- Since 2008, **Minneapolis Public Schools** has offered restorative justice services. The Safe and Healthy Learners Unit at the **Minnesota Department of Education** has promoted and used restorative measures for over a decade.



Pending Federal Legislation

- **Restorative Justice in Schools Act** (*H.B. 415*; Cohen, D-Tennessee) would allow school districts to use Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding to train teachers and counselors in **restorative justice** and conflict resolution and help save countless hours lost to school discipline each school year.
- **Successful, Safe, And Healthy Students Act** (*S. 919*; Harkin, D-Iowa) includes funding and technical assistance for implementing positive, preventive approaches to school discipline like **restorative justice** and schoolwide positive behavior supports.



Conclusions

1. Zero tolerance and other exclusionary discipline policies in schools do not work.
2. Restorative justice is an effective, evidence-based, nonpunitive disciplinary response based on repairing harm, including stakeholders, and accountability.
3. Restorative justice helps educators, juvenile justice professionals, and community members collectively and collaboratively reengage youth in school and keep them off the street and out of the juvenile justice system.
4. Restorative justice strategies work best when developed and used in collaboration with community input.



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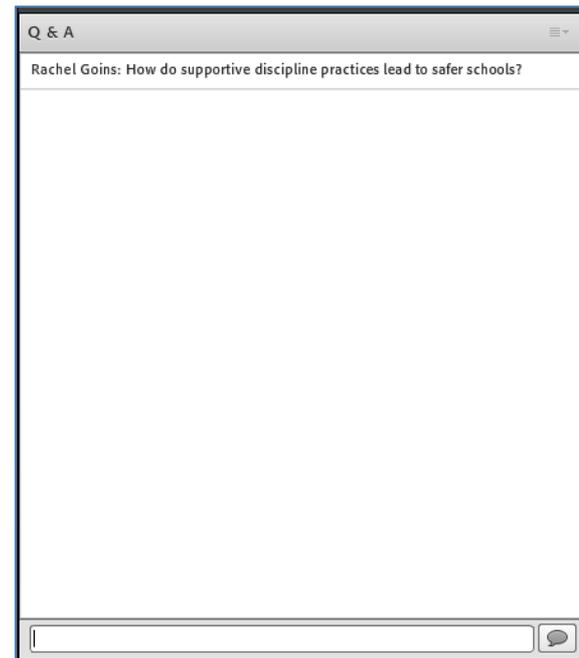
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Questions?



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Restorative Discipline in Schools: Creating Caring Climates



Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, MSW

Restorative Justice Coordinator, Mennonite
Central Committee U.S.

A new step forward:

The only difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is the way in which we use them.

-Adriana Doyle



“There will never be enough consequences to motivate tough kids to learn and to behave if we are not first developing positive relationships. And without positive teacher-student relationships, no discipline plan will work.”

- Jim Fay, *Schoolwide Discipline Plan with the Loopholes*



<http://www.shackled.org/linked/2003.October/missing.motivation.jpg>



Restorative Justice/Discipline Definition

Restorative justice promotes values and principles that use inclusive, collaborative approaches for being in community. These approaches validate the experiences and needs of everyone within the community, particularly those who have been marginalized, oppressed or harmed. These approaches allow us to act and respond in ways that are healing rather than alienating or coercive.



Principles of Restorative Justice

All people should be treated with dignity and respect, recognizing that each person has “some piece of the truth”.



Principles of Restorative Justice (continued)

Each of us needs to be responsible for our actions and needs to be held accountable for those actions.

Savage Chickens

by Doug Savage



www.savagechickens.com



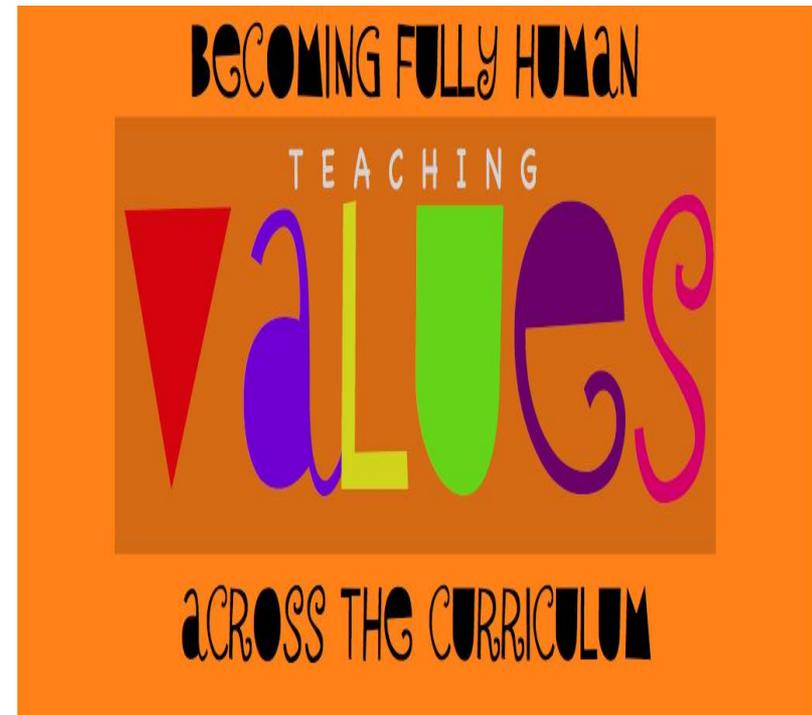
Principles of Restorative Justice (continued)

By our presence we are all members of communities and therefore connected to one another.



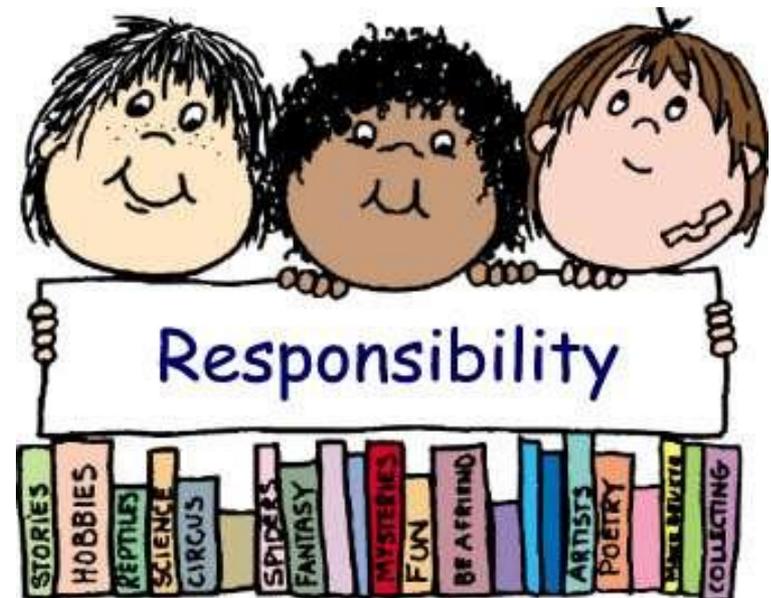
Values and Principles of Restorative Discipline

- Realizes that relationships are central to building community
- Addresses misbehavior and harm in a way that strengthens relationships
- Focuses on the harm done as well as the rule-breaking
- Gives voice to the person harmed
- Engages in collaborative problem-solving
- Empowers change and growth
- Enhances responsibility



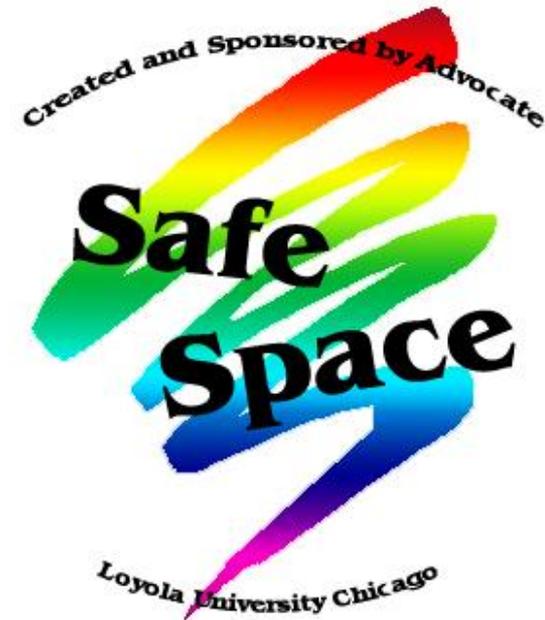
Aim of Restorative Discipline for the Person Who Has Caused Harm

- Recognize the life-draining effects of their behavior on another individual, the school, and the community
- Take responsibility for their actions by being accountable to the person harmed
- Make a commitment to more life-giving behavior



Aim of Restorative Discipline for the Person Harmed

- Satisfies immediate safety concerns
- Provides an opportunity to speak about the harm
- Provides an opportunity to talk about their needs and how they can be met



Characteristics of Peaceable Schools

- Educators as models of restorative practices
- A physical and emotional ethos of care in the classroom and building
- Restorative school structures
- Conflict Resolution Education (CRE)
- Kindness curriculum
- Includes differentiated instruction and differentiated discipline
- Flexible policies



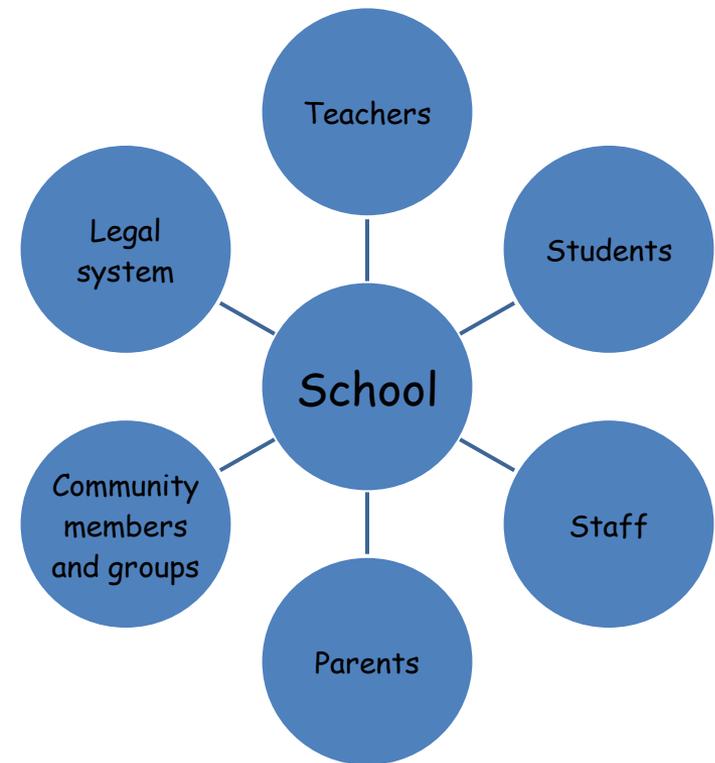
Restorative Discipline in Schools: What Does It Look Like

- Whole-school approach
- Reintegration following suspension
- Truancy mediation
- Class meetings/Circles
- Circles/Conferencing issues of harm
- Anti-bullying



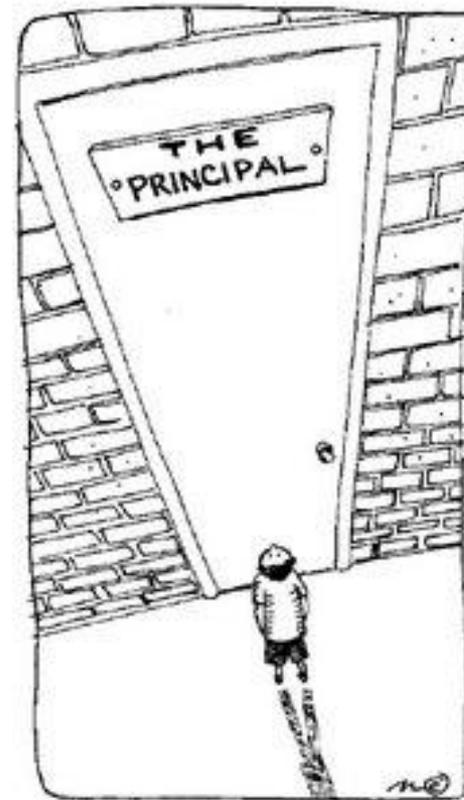
Whole-School Approach

- Start where there is interest which may be with a particular program or issue
- Continue to involve stakeholders—students, parents, community organizations, faith-based groups, legal system—in determining next steps



Suspension

- Some refer to suspension as the “school-to-prison pipeline” often because there is no plan for reintegration
- Texas 6-year study released July, 2011 (every 7th grader in 2000-2002)
 - 23% with one suspension had at least 1 contact with legal system
 - 2% with no suspensions had contact with legal system



Class Meetings

Provide students with opportunities to:

- Belong, feel accepted and believe that their thoughts and opinions matter
- Discuss issues and concerns important to them



Moment-to-Moment Responses

- Reframe
- “Ouch” and “Oops”
- Catch the good
- Rewind
- Mini-chats
- Unwind
- Wind up



Created by Judy Mullet. Adapted by Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, 2008.



Circles

- Provide an orderly and reflective process that reinforces positive values
- Remind us that each of us wants to be connected to others in a good way
- Connect us through values of respect and caring



Truancy Issues

- Conferencing/mediation model includes stakeholders from all facets of student's life to improve communication and deal with root causes
- Utah example: Of 276 mediated cases, 75% of the youth involved improved their school attendance and were not referred to juvenile court



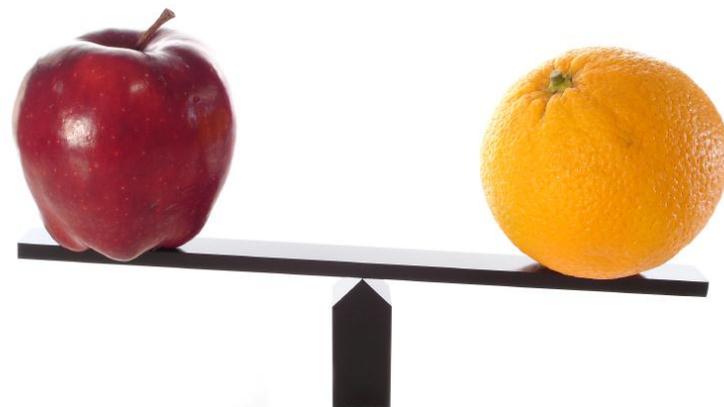
Conferencing/Mediation

Peer Mediation

- Involves all participants
- Voluntary facilitated dialogue to discuss conflict

Issues of Harm

- Involves victim/offender
- Voluntary facilitated dialogue with all stakeholders present
- Discussion/acknowledgement of harm
- Solutions agreed to by all
- Discussion of the future



Anti-Bullying

- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
- Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT)
- The Incredible Years

Let's Complete The Puzzle



DESIGNED BY: JIMMY McDONALD & ALLAN TURNBULL

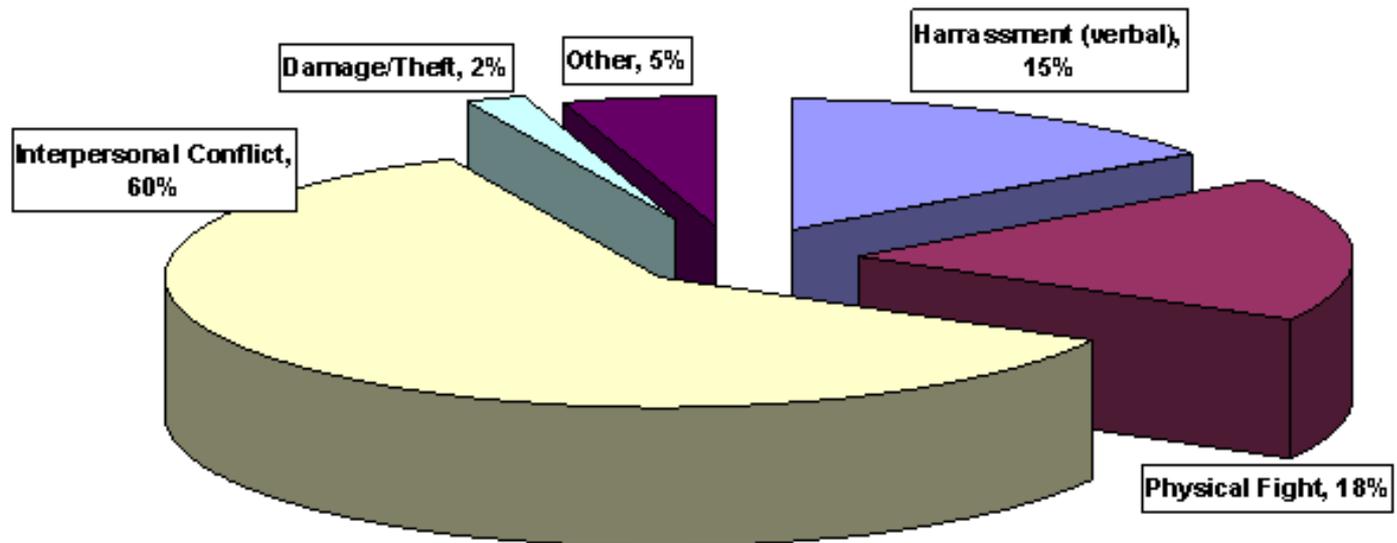
Together



Denver Public School August, 2008

1,090 infractions (812 students)

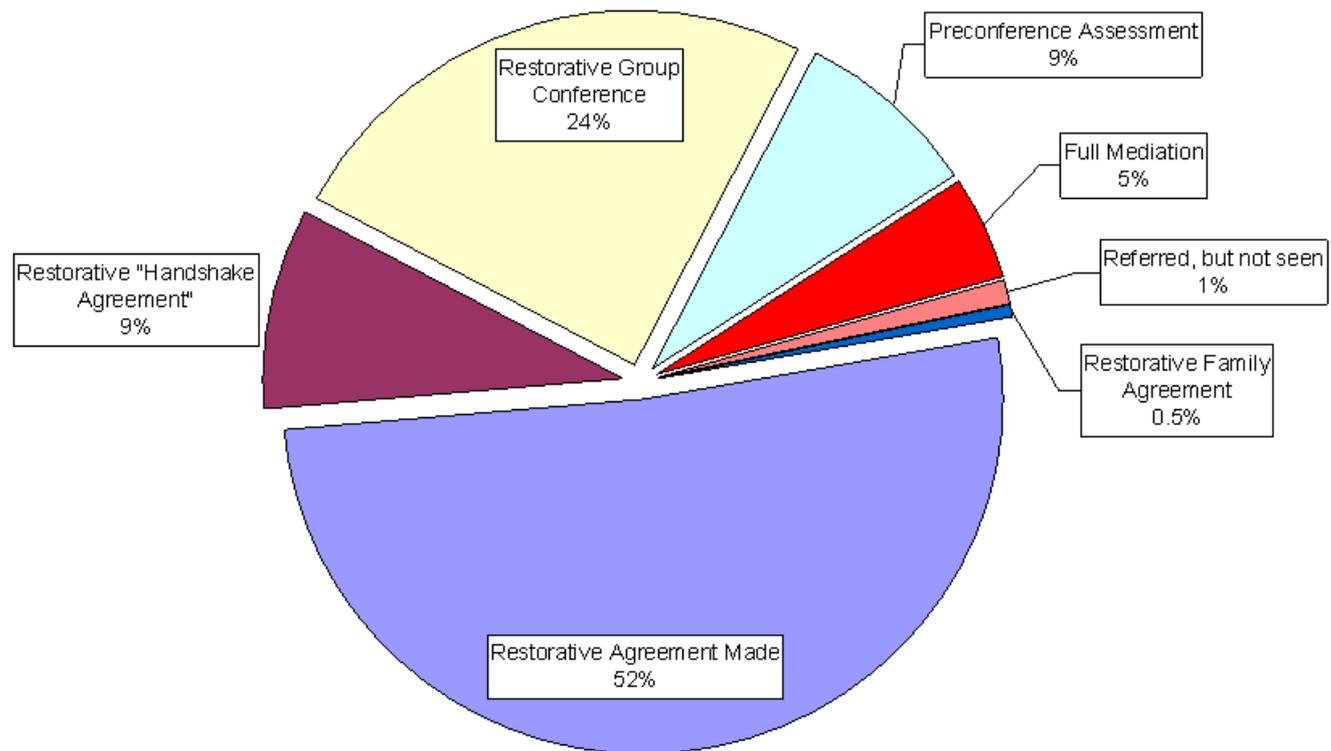
DPS Restorative Justice Project 2007-2008: Infractions by Type
(n = 1090)



Denver Public School August, 2008

DPS Restorative Justice Project 2007-2008 RJ Process Outcomes

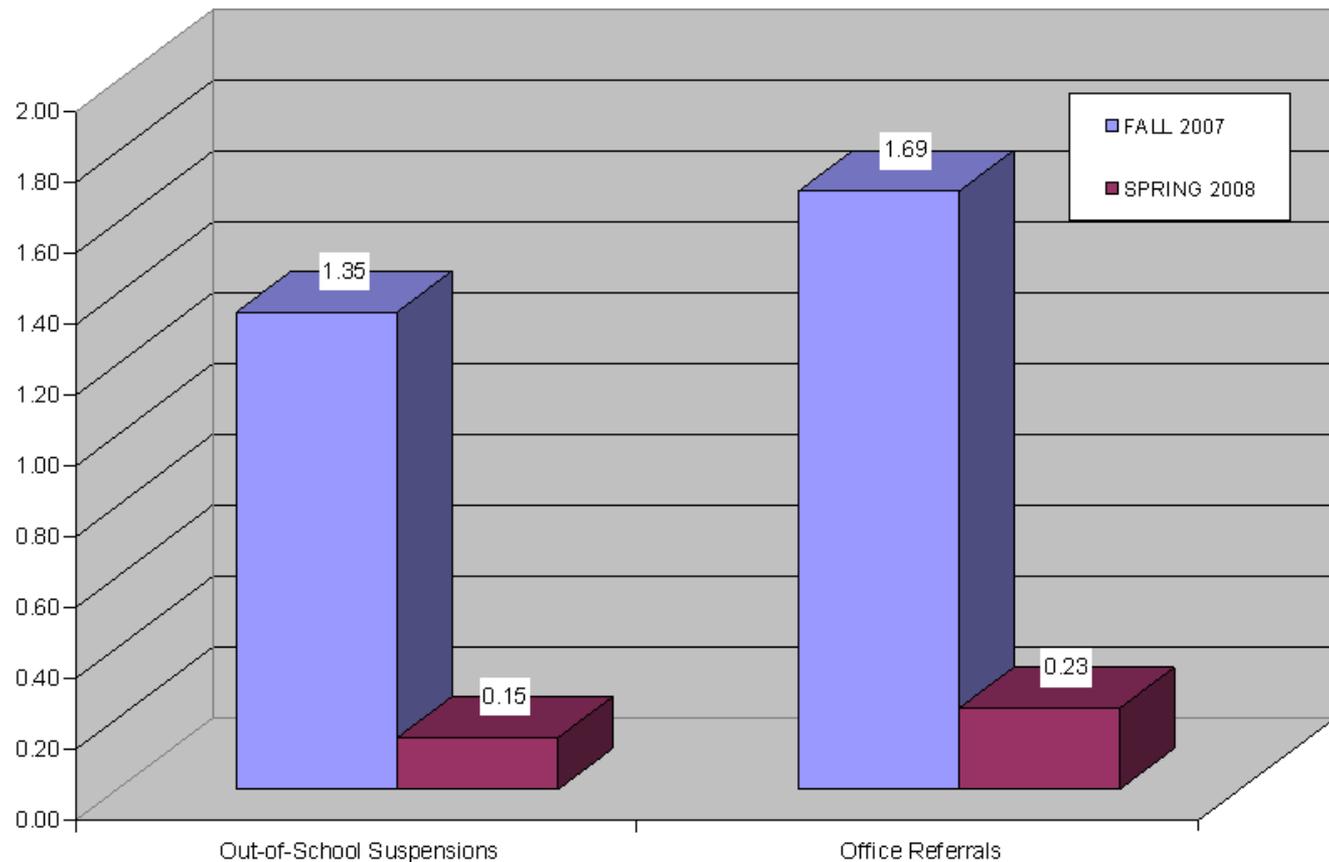
(n = 1090)



Denver Public School August, 2008

DPS Restorative Justice Project 2007-2008: Change in School Discipline
(n = 118)

- 15% of schools showed an 87% reduction in referrals in 2nd semester
- 13% had an average reduction of 92% in number of out-of-school suspensions in 2nd semester



A Challenge

“I started out in life, as most of us do, holding the maxim that I won’t believe it ‘till I see it. Yet the more I worked for *National Geographic* the more I realized I had it backwards; the way it really works is I won’t see it ‘till I believe it. That’s really the way life works.”

- Dewitt Jones, “*Celebrate What’s Right With The World*”



Contact Information

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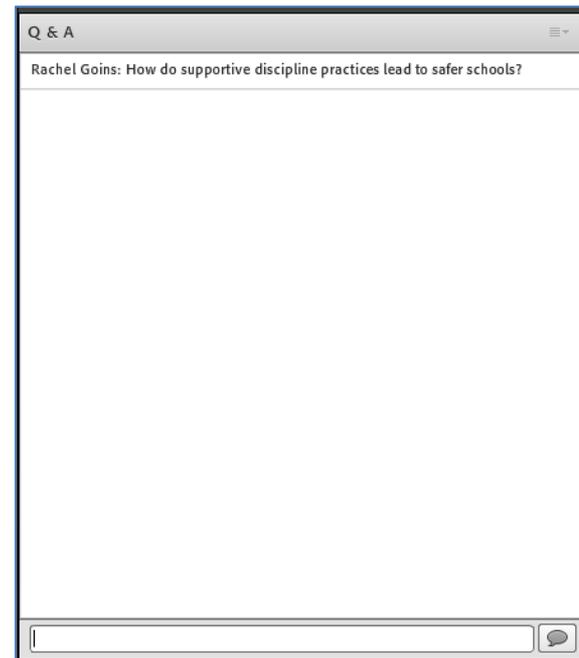
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Questions?



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Restorative Culture in Schools



Rita Renjitham Alfred

Co-founder, Restorative Justice Training Institute



Vulnerable Youth

- Zero tolerance policies lead to high suspensions and expulsions
- Disproportionate ‘Disciplinary’ Contact with students of color
 - Students of color and students with disabilities are more likely to be **suspended and expelled** than white students.
- Recidivism rates – about 90% for youth, 70% for adults



Challenges in Relating

- Adult-adult relationships – distrust
- Youth-youth relationships – isolation
- Youth-adult relationships
- Home-school connection
- Disengagement by adults and youth
- Low retention rates of school staff
- Low academic achievement



Experiencing Culture

“Culture is the result of messages that are received about what is really valued. People align their behaviour to these messages in order to fit in. Changing culture requires a systematic and planned change to these messages, whose sources are behaviour, symbols, and systems.”

- Carolyn Taylor, *“The Power of Culture: Turning the Soft Stuff into Business Advantage”*

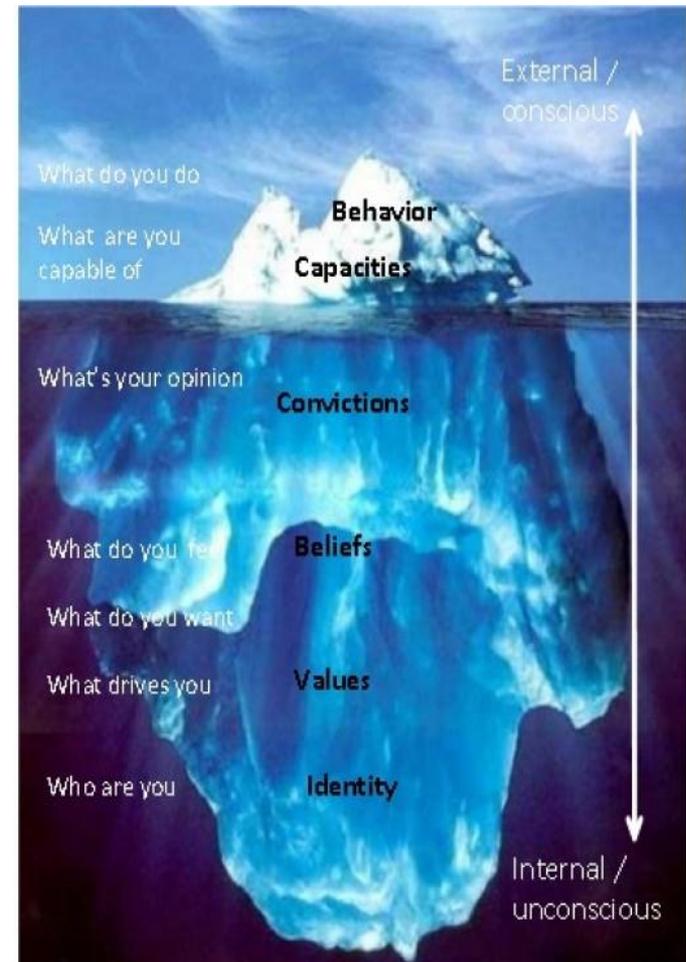


What is Visible? What is Not?

Culture is defined as the behaviors, norms, attitudes and assumptions that inform a group of people who are joined by common values, myths, and worldviews.

Culture forms the group's context, based on knowledge, experience and sensitivity to the issues primarily, though not exclusively of race/ethnicity, language, gender, sexual identity, socio-economic status, age and religion.

Culture serves as a roadmap for the members of the group. It creates a sense of belonging for its members.



Restorative Culture

- In a restorative culture, we are intentional about building caring communities where **relationships** and a deep sense of **belonging** are central. We relate to each other acting on our core values to create and build relationships rather than destroy our connections with each other.
 - **South Africa** - 'UBUNTU' in the Xhosa culture means: "I am because we are." Archbishop Desmond Tutu defines 'Ubuntu' as "the Essence of being human, being interconnected"
- Practices that sustain "safe and just school **communities**, grounded in the premise that human beings are **relational** and thrive in contexts of **social engagement** over control"
- Promotes and facilitates individual, community, and system accountability



Restorative Culture (continued)

- When harm is experienced within relationships, a restorative culture looks to repair the harm, attend to the needs and obligations that have arisen by engaging all the people involved in the harm.
 - **New Zealand, the Treaty of Waitangi - 3 Treaty principles of partnership, protection, and participation**
 - The principle of **partnership** is about responding to issues of power sharing and decision making.
 - The principle of **protection** is about acknowledging and valuing indigenous knowledge and pedagogical values.
 - **Participation** is the principle that provides individuals and groups with equity of access to resources and services.



Heart of Hope

- The true self in everyone is good, wise, and powerful...
- The world is profoundly interconnected...
- All human beings have a deep desire to be in a good relationship...
- All humans have gifts and everyone is needed for what they bring....
- Everything we need to make positive change is already here...
- Human beings are holistic...
- We need practices to build habits of living from the core self...





Goal: Community Strength

- Restorative justice looks to strengthen community
- Harmful behavior weakens school community
- Reverse what we are doing now – of handing our conflicts to a third party
- Set up restorative structures that involve the community to acknowledge and resolve ‘harm’ caused in our schools and neighborhoods



Systems Change Is Needed

A restorative justice procedure can “help individuals move forward with accepting their accountability, but it doesn’t help the system or society move forward with theirs.”

- Jerry Elster,, *After Twenty-Six years in Prison: Reflections on Healing*



Change: Bottom Up and Top Down

Seventy percent of change initiatives fail for 3 critical reasons:

1. People leading the change process announce the change and consider that announcement sufficient for having changes implemented
2. People's concerns do not surface or are not heard
3. Those expected to change are not actively involved in the change process



Staff Concerns

- a. Information
- b. Professional
- c. Personal



Stages of Implementation

5 Stages in the Innovation Process (3–5 years):

1. Gaining Commitment
2. Developing Shared Vision
3. Developing Responsive and Effective Practice
4. Developing a Whole-School Approach
5. Establishing Professional Relationships



Example: Cole Middle School (Oakland)

- Adopted restorative justice and Peacemaking Circle practices (3 years)
- Started with adults
- Using a whole-school approach



Necessary Practices for Adults to Hold Restorative Container Effectively

Restorative justice training for all adults to increase capacity in restorative practices

Monthly 2-hour adult circles to build community and learn more about restorative principles and practices

Using Restorative practices to deal with conflict among adults



**Whole School Approach
(Brenda Morrison – 2004)**

Re-Build Relationships

Few

Restorative group conferencing; Circle to repair harm

Repair Relationships

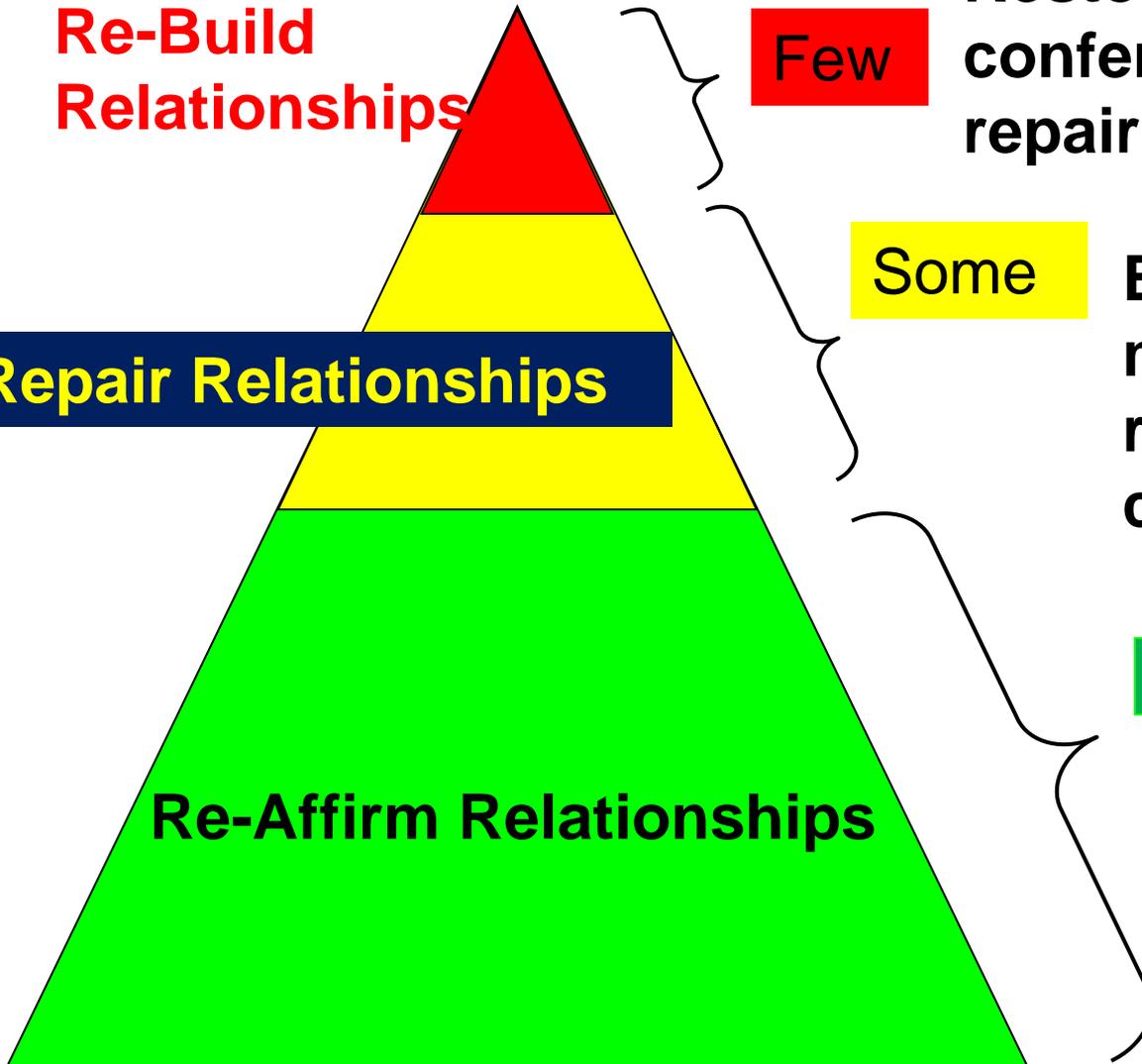
Some

Early Intervention: mediation, restorative chats, classroom circles

Re-Affirm Relationships

All

Prevention and skill building; community building



Continuum of Restorative Practices

Building Community

Repairing Harm

Community building circles in class and school

Conference/circle with a small group of students

Restorative responses to student behavior in the classroom

Restorative dialogue between several students

Classroom circle with a whole class

Community conference /circle with students, parents, and teachers

Restorative Justice at Cole Middle School: Findings

- Served as a practical alternative to zero-tolerance disciplinary policies
- Suspensions declined by 87 percent
- Students assumed greater responsibility and autonomy
- Restorative justice principles must be consistently applied, and restorative justice practitioners must be an enduring force for a successful school-based program
- School-based restorative justice must be grounded in the norms, values, and culture of the students, school, and surrounding community



Key Lessons at Cole Middle School

Resources and Training

- Budget sufficient resources to conduct initial trainings and to continue restorative practices.
- Involve and train key stakeholders before expanding as the formal discipline program.
- Address the tension between the authority that school personnel have over students and the increased equity that occurs within the restorative process.



Key Lessons at Cole Middle School (continued)

Practicing Restorative Justice

- Use restorative justice to strengthen feelings of community and accountability.
- Hold disciplinary circles only after information has been gathered and appropriate responsibility has been taken
- Ensure that the principles of restorative justice are informing practice.
- Place importance on the continuity of those who will be involved with students.
- Be consistent about when restorative justice approaches or traditional disciplinary measures will be used.



Key Lessons at Cole Middle School (continued)

Community-specific Implementation

- Adapt restorative justice to the school and to the culture of the community where it is implemented.
- Involve restorative justice leaders and other school personnel who understand schools, the communities in which the schools are located, and adolescents.
- When the school is located in a community suffering from violence and trauma from violence, use restorative justice to help students deal with harms in that community.



Working for Justice in Schools: A Call to Action

The Burns Institute (BI) has successfully initiated and are implementing a national dialogue on disproportionate minority contact (DMC) in juvenile detention.

- BI's method includes:
 - Data collection and analysis
 - Digging deeper to understand what policies, procedures and practices contribute to the disproportionality of disciplinary responses to youth of color
 - Developing community based alternatives
 - Community engagement
 - Sustaining accountability by maintaining community presence and pressure
 - Systems mapping – who is doing what and funding streams



Judge Joseph Flies-Away of the Hualapai Nation

Flies-Away spoke about a Hopi medicine man who thinks that Native American philosophy is going to save the world. A Hopi prophecy of the apocalypse alludes to a time when a web will cover the earth. The web was originally conceived of as a spider's web, then as electrical power lines. Now, said Flies-Away, the obvious metaphor is the World Wide Web. He concluded, "We're at that point now when people will either blow each other up or make peace. Indigenous thinking contributes to peace. We have decided as humans to move toward peace, but we have to keep applying restorative justice in how we do business."



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